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Introducing Bilingual Education

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Scenarios

A Bilingual Education Classroom in New York, U.S.

"Go to the computers in your head," Ms. Acuña says, as twenty-five pairs of hands grasp their heads and begin making motions. Children tap their foreheads intently, determined to find "their computer." This is a bilingual kindergarten classroom in Queens, New York. Ms. Acuña's class is comprised of U.S. Latino students of different backgrounds who are learning English. Her students speak Spanish at home, but Ms. Acuña will focus on promoting literacy and numeracy in both Spanish and English. She continues, "Find your mouse and press English only. Okay? Is everybody there? English only, *no español*." Now that the kindergarten class is set on English only, Ms. Acuña reads a book in English, asks questions in English, and expects her students to respond accordingly. Patricia tells Ms. Acuña that the first thing to do when it is time to read is to "look at the title." Yuniel raises his hand and says, "I see a bear." The comments begin with a flood – "I see a basket." "I see two bugs." "I see *un carruaje*."

When it is time for the math lesson, Ms. Acuña tells the students to go back to their computer, this time to switch to Spanish. The class will count backwards and forwards, using their *dedito señadito* to track the numbers on the page – "*cero, uno, dos, tres . . .*" They learn the value of a penny, and one student counts five pennies. "*Son cinco* pennies," he says. To this, Ms. Acuña responds, "*Sí, tienes razón, pero estamos en español. ¿cómo se dice* pennies *en español?*" (That's right, but remember we are in Spanish. So, how do we say "pennies" in Spanish?) This gentle reminder acknowledges a correct answer without complaining about the language in which it is given.

In this classroom, both languages are correct. They are valuable tools the children access, via the computer in their brains, to learn reading, writing, and arithmetic. A glance at the walls reinforces this idea. The room is adorned with posters, calendars, wall charts, alphabet, and other visuals labeled twice, in red and blue – blue for English, red for Spanish. And there's a poster that reads "*Te lo digo, y no hay engaño, ser bilingüe es una dicha que nos dura todo el año*" (I tell you, and it's no joke, being bilingual is a happiness that lasts throughout the year). Bilingualism is highly valued in Ms. Acuña's class. Although all of the children are Spanish speakers, the class spends each school day toggling back and forth from one language to the other without so much as a flinch.

Written by Kristin Jefferson, December 11, 2006

A Bilingual School in Japan

On the floor of a second-grade classroom, Atsuko and Michiko are working on math problems in English. One of them says: "We start with four. We take away one. How many are left?" The other one replies: "Three are left." Afterwards, the other child initiates the dialogue and changes the numbers. They are in an immersion program in Katoh School where, in the first three grades, approximately two thirds of the instruction takes place in English, whereas one third of the time is devoted to developing Japanese language and literacy. In fourth grade, approximately 50 percent of the instruction is in English and 50 percent is in Japanese. Atsuko and Michiko will continue into high school where they will follow both the Japanese curriculum and that of the International Baccalaureate. They will then be taking most of their classes in English.

For more on this school, see www.bi-lingual.com/School/ElementaryProgram.htm.

Overview

In this introductory chapter, we consider the following features of bilingual education:

- its definitions and characteristics;
- its beneficiaries and reasons;
- its geopolitics and language orientations.

Introduction

This chapter develops the main thesis of this book: that bilingual education is *the only way* to educate children in the twenty-first century. In this chapter, we develop an integrated plural vision for bilingual education, by which bilingualism is not simply seen as two separate monolingual codes – a vision that goes beyond "one plus one equals two." This plural vision depends upon the reconceptualization of understandings about language and bilingualism, further developed in Part II of this book – Bilingualism and Education.

Here we reconstitute the activity known as "bilingual education;" we reposition bilingual education for the twenty-first century, while building on the scholarship of the past; and we outline how this inclusive plural vision of bilingual education has the potential to transform the lives of children and adults throughout the world.

We also introduce the reader to the ways in which sociohistorical positionings, geopolitical forces, and language ideologies interact to sustain different kinds of bilingual education policies throughout the world. In considering this, the chapter introduces another complexity to the topic of bilingual education: states, nations, and social groups have different histories, needs, challenges, and aspirations for their children; therefore different educational options need to be available. This point will be further developed in Part III of this book – Bilingual Education Policy – where bilingual education theoretical frameworks and types, as well as language-in-education policies throughout the world, will be reflected upon.

In considering definitions of bilingual education, we also approach another main thesis of this book: that bilingual education practices must be extended to reflect the complex multilingual and multimodal communicative networks of the twenty-first century. Part IV of this book – Bilingual Education Practices – suggests curricular, pedagogical, and assessment practices that respond to this complexity.

What Is Bilingual Education?

Definitions and characteristics

What is bilingual education? We think immediately of someone who has a good command of two languages as bilingual; and of the use of two languages in education as bilingual education. But, as Cazden and Snow (1990) point out, bilingual education is "a simple label for a complex phenomenon." Colin Baker (1993: 9), one of the most perceptive scholars in the field of bilingual education, suggests that sometimes the term bilingual education is used to refer to the education of students who are already speakers of two languages, and at other times to the education of those who are studying additional languages. Some students who learn additional languages are already speakers of the majority language(s) used in their society, while sometimes they are immigrants, refugees, Indigenous peoples,[1] members of minoritized groups,[2] or perhaps even members of the majority group,[3] learning a different language, the dominant language, in school. Bilingual education refers to

education in more than one language, often encompassing more than two languages (Baker, 2001). Because of the complexity surrounding bilingual education, many people misunderstand it. In the United States, for example, many lay people think that teaching immigrants using only English is bilingual education.

Bilingual education is different from traditional language education programs that teach a second or a foreign language. For the most part, these traditional second- or foreign-language programs teach the language *as a subject*, whereas bilingual education programs use the language *as a medium of instruction*; that is, bilingual education programs teach content through an additional language other than the children's home language. For example, in the scenarios at the beginning of this chapter, Spanish and English are media of instruction in Ms. Acuña's kindergarten, whilst Japanese and English are used in instruction in the program in Japan. More than anything else, bilingual education is a way of providing *meaningful and equitable education*, as well as an education that builds tolerance towards other linguistic and cultural groups. In so doing, bilingual education programs provide a general education, teach in two or more languages, develop multiple understandings about languages and cultures, and foster appreciation for human diversity. Traditional second- or foreign-language programs often aim to use only the target language in instruction, whereas bilingual education programs always include some form of more than one language in at least some parts of instruction. Although the approach may be different, the development of some type of bilingualism is accomplished in both *language-teaching programs*[4] and *bilingual education programs*.

Depending on the type of language-teaching and bilingual education program followed, it may be difficult to differentiate between bilingual education and second- or foreign-language teaching programs. As we shall see, language-teaching programs in the twenty-first century increasingly integrate language and content, therefore coming to resemble bilingual education; and bilingual education programs are paying more attention than ever to explicit language instruction, therefore coming to resemble language-teaching programs. And although many second-language and foreign-language programs pay lip service to using only the target language in instruction, in reality bilingual ways of using languages (more on this below) are very often present in these programs – in the instructional material used, in the language use of the teacher, and certainly in the language use of the children. Moreover, sometimes in bilingual education programs one finds a language ideology that is very similar to that found in language-teaching programs, with teachers attempting to use only the target language in instruction: that is, no translation is provided and the teacher never uses both languages within the same lesson. But what continues to separate these two kinds of programs has to do with the broader general goal of bilingual education – the use of two languages to *educate generally, meaningfully, equitably, and for tolerance and appreciation of diversity*[5] – and the narrower goal of second- or foreign-language teaching – to learn an additional language. In educating broadly, bilingual education focuses not only on the acquisition of additional languages, but also on helping students to become global and responsible citizens as they learn to function across cultures and worlds, that is, beyond the cultural borders in which traditional schooling often operates. In educating equitably, bilingual education focuses on making schooling meaningful and

Table 1.1 Differences between Bilingual Education and Language Education

	Bilingual Education	*Foreign or Second-Language Education*
Overarching Goal	Educate meaningfully[6] and some type of bilingualism	Competence in additional language
Academic Goal	Educate bilingually and be able to function across cultures	Learn an additional language and become familiar with an additional culture
Language Use	Languages used as media of instruction	Additional language taught as subject
Instructional Use of Language	Uses some form of two or more languages	Uses target language mostly
Pedagogical Emphasis	Integration of language and content	Explicit language instruction

comprehensible for the millions of children whose home languages are different from the dominant language of school and society. This last aim is particularly relevant for the education of immigrants, refugees, Indigenous peoples throughout the world (for example, Tribal peoples in India and Bangladesh), autochthonous minorities, and many African and Asian children. The differences between bilingual education and language education programs are displayed in Table 1.1.

Even the widely accepted definition of bilingual education being the use of two languages in education is not straightforward. As Baker (2001: 4) points out, "the ownership of two languages is not so simple as having two wheels or two eyes." And being educated bilingually cannot be equated to being given two balanced wheels like those of a bicycle: bilingual education is not simply about *one language plus a second language equals two languages*. The vision of bilingual education as a sum of equals reduces bilingual education to the use of two or more separate languages, usually in different classroom spaces, time frames, contexts, or as spoken by different teachers. In this reductive view, bilingual education has been often interpreted as being the simple sum of discrete monolingual language practices. Separate and full competencies in each language are expected of students. Furthermore, these "idealized" bilingual education practices take little account of how languages are used in society, or of real bilingual and multilingual practices.

Throughout this book, we refer to the language ideologies that support language practices in bilingual education as being like the two balanced wheels of a bicycle, as "monoglossic." Monoglossic ideologies of bilingualism and bilingual education treat each of the child's languages as separate and whole, and view the two languages as bounded autonomous systems. We contrast this monoglossic language ideology to one based on Bakhtin's (1981) use of *heteroglossic* as multiple voices. A heteroglossic ideology of bilingualism considers multiple language practices in interrelationship, and leads to other constructions of bilingual education, which we consider in the next section.[7]

A new angle

In the twenty-first century, our complex multilingual and multimodal global communicative networks[8] often reflect much more than two separate monolingual codes. More than a bicycle with two balanced wheels, bilingual education must be more like a *moon buggy* or *all-terrain vehicle*, with different legs that extend and contract in order to ground itself in the ridges and craters of the surface. Communication among human beings, and especially of children among themselves and with their teachers, is full of craters, ridges, and gaps. And when this communication occurs among children speaking different languages, or among children speaking one language and the teacher speaking the other, these features are particularly salient. A bicycle just would not do for this terrain. And so, a bilingual education that values only disconnected wholes and devalues the often loose parts, and insists on the strict separation of languages is *not the only way* to successfully educate children bilingually, although it is a widely conducted practice.

As will be seen in Part III of this book, there are many paths (and types of programs) that lead to differentiated levels of bilingual practice and use. Bilingual education that is adaptive, able to expand and contract, as the communicative situations shift and as the terrain changes, is precisely what all children in the twenty-first century need. What is important for bilingual education, then, may not always be the full language parts in isolation, but the quality and the effectiveness of the integrated sum. *One plus one does not always equal two*.

The complex networks in which children participate require us to have a different vision than the linear and directional one embodied in the traditional sum. Language practices are not unidirectional but polydirectional. We could compare today's language practices to the South Asian banyan trees,[9] which grow up, out, down, horizontally, or vertically through the air until they come upon something solid. The language practices of bilinguals are interrelated and expand in different directions to include the different communicative contexts in which they exist. The varied bilingual practices in schools protect identities, communities, and relationships, much in the same way that the roots of banyan trees in, for example, the doorway in the Ta Prohm Temple at Angkor Wat in Cambodia, help preserve the structure.

Children do not enter school as cohorts with static and homogeneous language uses. Their language practices cannot be added to in linear fashion, since the children come and go into schools at different times, in different grades, having different language resources. And they bring a variety of language practices to the classroom that interact with the language practices of school, changing their own and those of the schools. What is needed today are practices firmly rooted in the multilingual and multimodal language and literacy practices of children in schools of the twenty-first century, practices that would be informed by a vision starting from the sum: an *integrated plural vision*.

Educating children bilingually enables language practices that, like the banyan trees, build on each other in multiple ways and directions – up, out, down, across – but yet rooted in the terrain and realities from which they emerge. Bilingual education, for us, is simply any instance in which children's and teachers' communicative

practices in school *normally include the use of multiple multilingual practices that maximize learning efficacy and communication*; and that, in so doing, *foster and develop tolerance towards linguistic differences, as well as appreciation of languages and bilingual proficiency*. Our definition, then, does not depart greatly from the ways in which others have defined bilingual education. Where we perhaps differ is in grounding bilingual education firmly on the language and literacy practices that we observe in schools, on what has become widely known as "bilingual encounters" (Martin, 2003), instead of on theoretical frameworks of how language ought to be and ought to function, frameworks that have little to do with actualizing the potential of children's intellect, imagination, and creativity. In other words, we aim to have bilingual education reconceptualized in response to the social interaction among students, teachers, and other members of the educational community, using two or more different languages, not merely as abstract language practices devoid of the complex social realities of multilingualism. These more complex understandings of languages and bilingualism, or, rather, of the way that people use languages, are the topic of Part II of this book. And this reconceptualization also has important implications for curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment in bilingual education, the subject of Part IV of this book.

Reimagining

Bilingual education in the twenty-first century must be reimagined and expanded, as it takes its rightful place as a meaningful way to educate *all* children and language learners in the world today. In this book we have chosen to use "bilingual education," rather than "multilingual education," as the umbrella term to cover a wide spectrum of practice and policy. Bilingual education, as we shall see in future chapters, takes on many different forms, and increasingly, in the complexity of the modern world, includes forms where two or more languages are separated for instruction, but also forms where two or more languages are used together in complex combinations. All of these are, to us, instances of bilingual education. For the sake of brevity, and for continuity with past practice, we have decided to both reimagine and extend the term, and show "the entire beast as a multisplendored thing" (Fishman, 1976: p. x). Our use of "bilingual education" encompasses what many have referred to as "multilingual education" (see, for example, Cenoz and Genesee, 1998; García, Skutnabb-Kangas, and Torres-Guzmán, 2006). The European Commission also uses the term "multilingual education" to refer to its policy of "mother tongue plus two other languages for all" (European Commission, 2003). UNESCO adopted the term "multilingual education" in 1999 in the General Conference Resolution 12 to refer to the use in education of at least three languages: the mother tongue, a regional or national language, and an international language (UNESCO, 2003). Our use of the term "bilingual education" also includes these instances of *trilingual* and *multilingual education*. Bilingual education is here used to refer to education using more than one language, and/or language varieties, in whatever combination.

In today's globalized world, bilingual education is at times criticized, on the one hand, because it is seen as maintaining separate linguistic enclaves, and, on the other,

because it does not accommodate the linguistic heterogeneity of the times. For example, in the United States bilingual education is often blamed, first, for the ghettoization[10] of U.S. Latino[11] students in segregated classrooms, and, second, for the lack of attention paid in these programs to ethnolinguistic minorities other than Latinos. But although U.S. Latinos are often educated in segregated classrooms, these arrangements have much more to do with residential and social class segregation than with bilingual education per se. And although it is important to pay attention to *all* children with different ethnolinguistic profiles, it is Latino children who are often most in need of bilingual education programs in the U.S., for they constitute the greatest proportion of English-language learners in the country (approximately 75 to 79 percent), and yet receive but scant attention. Besides, as we will see in Chapter 8, there are bilingual education programs in the United States in many languages besides Spanish and English.

Bilingual education is also often blamed because nations and states[12] seeking legitimacy in the twentieth century have often claimed an immutable relationship between language and identity, using bilingual education as a means to strengthen that link (Heller, 1999). For example, referring to some of the nations of Spain, such as Galicia and Catalonia, Del Valle and Gabriele-Stheeman (2002) explain that, as nation-states had done since the Enlightenment, the Spanish entities that achieved some autonomy following the end of the dictatorship of Francisco Franco based their language-in-education policy on an ideology that linked their identity and language strictly and unidirectionally.

Although all these criticisms are taken on board, they do not constitute reasons for abandoning the many practices associated with bilingual education, but are rather arguments for expanding them. In fact, now more than ever, the world recognizes the importance of bilingual education; although it chooses, many times, to call it by other names, as we will see in Part III of this book.

In the United States, the growth of immigration and migration, especially of Spanish speakers, has unleashed a reaction against bilingual education, leading to the substitution of the term "bilingual" by the term "English language acquisition."[13] The states of California, Arizona, and Massachusetts have declared bilingual education illegal. And the term "bilingual education" is often attached only to programs for recently arrived immigrants that are *transitional* in nature, and not to programs that include speakers of English and where two languages are used throughout the child's education. In fact, these two-way bilingual education programs in the United States are now called, in many instances, *dual language education*, again silencing the word "bilingual."

Within the European Union, bilingual education is being promoted under the banner of CLIL/EMILE, acronyms which refer to "Content and Language Integrated Learning/*Enseignement d'une Matière par l'Intégration d'une Langue Etrangère*" (CLIL/EMILE, 2002). The choice of CLIL/EMILE responds to the fact that the term "bilingual education" is politically loaded for certain European countries, even though these are bilingual programs that use more than one language in instruction.[14]

In Canada, the persistent voices of First Nations peoples, and their efforts to revitalize and maintain their languages, continue to challenge the limitation of bilingual education only to the languages of power: English and French (see, for

example, Heller, 1999, for Canada). And the recognition of the multilingualism of many countries in Africa and Asia in particular has also served to question the viability of bilingual education in only two languages in a more complex sociolinguistic order.

Throughout the world, bilingual education practices are becoming more popular than ever, and we use the term "bilingual education" because it enables us to link to the research, scholarship, policy, and practice of the last fifty years. We also use it because bilingual education is centered in schools[15] where curriculum and assessment are mostly linear, inducing educators to think of language acquisition in similar ways. Thus, usually children are initially schooled bilingually, that is, in two languages, even when the intent is to develop proficiency in more than two languages, or even when many more than two separate languages are used in instruction. There is much scholarship on bilingual pedagogy, bilingual curriculum, and bilingual assessment, and "multilingual" only refers to its multiplicity. Programs that educate teachers to use more than one language in instruction are also most often referred to as bilingual education programs. Another reason for using the term "bilingual education" is that it remains appropriate, as we will see in future chapters, for ethnolinguistic groups who live in bilingual contexts where two languages predominate, or for whom the use of two languages in schooling seems sufficient.

In sum, although we recognize that in some instances bilingual education is simply not enough, we prefer the term "bilingual education" here because it is more grounded in theory, research, practice, and reality than "multilingual education." We also think that it is easier to understand the complexity of bilingual education if we start with a discussion of two languages, and then extend these notions when considering more multilingual possibilities. In what follows we briefly consider the reasons for bilingual education, which will be expanded upon in Chapter 5.

Beneficiaries and Reasons

Beneficiaries

The overarching principle of this book is that some form of bilingual education is *good for all education, and therefore good for all children, as well as good for all adult learners*. This is a principle that we have always held; one that was well established by Fishman (1976). Bilingual education is good for all – language majorities, that is, powerful ethnolinguistic groups, as well as language minorities, those without power. An education that is bilingual is good for the rich and the poor, for the powerful and the lowly, for Indigenous peoples and immigrants, for speakers of official and/or national languages, and for those who speak regional languages. Bilingual education is not only good for children in gifted and talented programs, but also good for children in vocational and technical education, as well as for those in special education. It is important for hearing children, as well as Deaf children. Bilingual education is also good for adults in lifelong language-learning situations, since bilingual individuals enjoy cognitive and social advantages over

monolinguals (see Chapter 5). As Fishman (1978b: 47) has said: "In a multilingual world it is obviously more efficient and rational to be multilingual than not, and that truism increasingly applies to the whales, as well as the minnows."

Although the state and particular ethnolinguistic groups might benefit collectively from bilingual education,[16] the value of bilingual education is in what it offers children, youths and adults in general. Bilingual education has the potential of being a *transformative* school practice, able to educate all children in ways that stimulate and expand their intellect and imagination, as they gain ways of expression and access different ways of being in the world. Speaking specifically about the potential of bilingual education for the United States, Fishman (1978b: 1) states: "Bilingual education is a celebration of liberation from provincialism for those who know only English and liberation from self-doubt for those who haven't yet learned English."

Reasons

It has been long recognized that schools play a key role in social and cultural reproduction (Apple, 1982). The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1991) has linked education to reproduction of the social order. Bourdieu proposes that we view education as capital, an asset of quantifiable value. At schools, students acquire *cultural capital*, that is, knowledge, abilities, and strategies related to the presentation of self; as well as *symbolic capital* having to do with respectability and worthiness. Also valuable is *linguistic capital*, the ability to use appropriate norms of language. Being able to use languages effectively, Bourdieu argues, increases one's "wealth" because it allows one to interact with others in various social contexts. In a sense, knowing how to use a language is a way of gaining cultural and symbolic capital. By using a language effectively, one can gather information and build self-worth through social interactions. Bourdieu believes that the ability of students to build linguistic capital is dependent mostly on the education they receive, and thus schools play a major role in regulating language as capital and mediating access to it.

Monolingual education has at times been used as a way to limit access and legitimate the linguistic practices of those already in power. Bilingual education has *the potential* to give access to languages of power.[17] And bilingual education can also legitimize language practices in a minoritized language, giving authenticity to the bilingual practices of many. As such, bilingual education can be *transformative*. As Lewis says (1978: 20, our italics): "Bilingual education has been advocated for entirely pedagogical reasons, while the fundamental rationale for the proposal is to bring about *greater political, economic, and social equality* [. . . A]ll forms of education are concerned with the redistribution of power or the maintenance of its current distribution." As we will see throughout this book, bilingual education can bring about greater social equality. The tensions surrounding bilingual education often have to do with dominant groups protecting their power.

Before we start critically examining our views of languages, bilingualism, and bilingual education in Part II of this book, it is important to consider how geopolitical and sociohistorical forces have shaped *the study* of bilingual education. We

offer here a general historical perspective of how the field of bilingual education has evolved. But geopolitical forces affect states or social groups differently, so bilingual education options co-exist in the twenty-first century, as we will further consider in Part III of this book.

Geopolitics and Language Orientations

In the beginning . . . enrichment

The use of two languages in education is not new. Mackey (1978: 2–3) describes how the 16,000 tablets unearthed in Aleppo, Syria, in 1977, indicated that bilingual schooling is at least 4,000 to 5,000 years old. The tablets were used to teach children to read and write in Eblaite (a language closely related to Akkadian, spoken in Ancient Mesopotamia and written in cuneiform script[18]) and Sumerian, which by then was a classical sacred language.

After the people of the Mediterranean port of Ugarit developed a sequential alphabetic form of writing around 1500 BC, bilingual education spread throughout the ancient world. In the East, this sequential alphabet became the Aramaic alphabet which brought about the Persian, Indian, Arabic, and Hebrew scripts. In the West, it became the Greek alphabet, which gave rise to the modern Roman and Cyrillic alphabets (Mackey, 1978). E. Glyn Lewis (1977) has shown how in the West, from the second century onward, Greek–Latin bilingual education was the way to educate boys from Roman aristocratic homes, who were expected to learn the language of the admired Hellenic civilization. Bilingualism was seen as a form of enrichment.

Many schools have always practiced some form of bilingual education. It has always been common, for example, for the school text to be written in a language or a register different from that spoken by the school children. Translation of classical texts into vernaculars, one form of bilingual education, has always been central to the notion of schooling. And the reading of sacred texts in one language, with the study of commentaries written in another language, and discussion in yet another language, has also been a traditional way of schooling many ethnolinguistic groups. It has also been common for teachers, whether bilingual themselves or not, to teach in a language other than the one the children speak with each other. The purpose of schooling, and the bilingual practices observed, has been often related to the oscillation between the language practices of the home and community and those of the sacred and classical texts studied in school.

Bilingual education has come into its own especially since the second half of the twentieth century, as schools have acknowledged the linguistic heterogeneity of children. But positionings and ideologies towards bilingualism in school have shifted in different contexts even at the same historical juncture. Ruiz (1984) has offered a framework with which to examine different language orientations: 1) language as a problem, 2) language as a right, and 3) language as a resource. We use the lens of language orientations to discuss the geopolitical forces that have promoted one or another perspective on bilingualism, and, therefore, on bilingual education (for a summary, see Table 1.2 below).

As a problem

It is important to situate the emergence in the twentieth century of bilingual education for the masses as a result of *modernist development ideological frameworks* that imagined, constructed, and narrated a "nation-state" into being in one language,[19] and thus considered bilingualism to be a problem. Rooted in structural-functionalist concepts, modernization theory posits that the development of an independent, modern nation-state calls for urbanization, secularization, and the citizens' transformation from a traditional to a modern disposition (Peet, 1999; Tsai, 2005). As a result of industrial and urban developments in the nineteenth century, languages became "modern;" that is, languages which symbolized national identity were standardized, codified, and used in schools, to the exclusion of others.

Especially after World War I and II, nations within the constructed "nation-state," whose languages did not coincide with the one elevated to privileged status, became cause for concern. This was the case, for example, of Latvians in the former Soviet Union who were forced to learn Russian and to give up Latvian; the nations and their languages were viewed as a problem. Bilingual education became an instrument, in some cases, of improving the teaching of the language chosen for modernization, and, in others, of linguistically assimilating all people.

At the same time, in 1953, UNESCO, responding to the educational failure of children in colonial situations, issued an important resolution declaring that it was axiomatic that a child be taught to read in their home language. The resolution stated:

> On educational grounds we recommend that the use of the mother tongue be extended to as late a stage in education as possible. In particular, pupils should begin their schooling through the medium of the mother tongue, because they understand it best and because to begin their school life in the mother tongue will make the break between home and school as small as possible.

Based on this principle, efforts to use the children's language in education, especially in the early grades, gained strength, leading to the first official uses of what has since been termed "transitional bilingual education," that is, the use of the child's heritage language in the early grades and *only* until the child is fluent in the majority or colonial language. Despite the transitional and temporary aspects of this type of bilingual education, transitional bilingual education opened the door for schooling the masses, providing for the use of local languages, in addition to the other language, at times a colonial one, in the education of the young. Bilingual education was recognized around the world as being capable to do for the masses, and their children, what it had so well done for the elite – ensuring the acquisition of the languages of power through schooling while educating. But the potential of bilingual education for all children did not fully materialize because language difference, in this modernist conceptualization, was seen as a problem.

As a right

The worldwide economic downturn of the 1970s, and the ensuing widening of social inequities, led to an acknowledgment that modernization had failed and that

decolonization did not necessarily translate into self-determination or sovereignty (Pepper, 1996; Tsai, 2005). The ability of a state's bilingual education policies to transform citizens and societies, espoused by theories of modernization, was called into question (Fagerlind and Saha, 1989). The role of sociohistorical processes in shaping particular forms of bilingual education, and in particular the role of class, ethnicity, race, language, and gender in such shaping, was given increased attention (Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson, 1994; Tollefson, 1991, 2002; Wiley, 1996b, 1999; Wright, 2004). Some forms of bilingual education, especially transitional bilingual education, were increasingly criticized, as language minorities claimed their language rights and developed their own forms of bilingual schooling. Language minorities who had lost their home languages developed bilingual education programs that supported the revitalization of these languages. Other language minorities who felt threatened linguistically were able to set up programs to develop their home languages. In differentiating what came earlier from the way in which language-in-education policies were increasingly *critically* conceived, Ricento (2000: 208, our italics) says: "It seems that the key variable which separates the older, positivistic/technicist approaches from the newer critical/postmodern ones is *agency*, that is, the role(s) of individuals and collectivities in the processes of language use, attitudes, and ultimately policies." Language difference was seen more and more as a right which had to be negotiated (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000), and language minorities started gaining agency in shaping their own language policies and practices in the education of their children.

As a resource[20]

The end of the Cold War, the development of globalization, and the growing role of international organizations, have accelerated the movement of peoples and have challenged the sovereignty of states in the twenty-first century. With the increasing awareness of other languages, and the dominance, especially, of English, but also of Chinese, Spanish, and Arabic throughout the world (Graddol, 2006), bilingual education has taken yet another turn, now growing often without the direct intervention of the state, and including forms that respond to a much more dynamic language use.

In supporting bilingual or multilingual education for all children in the world, UNESCO (2003: 17–18) emphasized the importance of both the global and the national and declared:

> the requirements of *global and national* participation, and the specific needs of particular, culturally and linguistically distinct communities can only be addressed by multilingual education. In regions where the language of the learner is not the official or national language of the country, bilingual and multilingual education can make mother tongue instruction possible while providing at the same time the acquisition of languages used in larger areas of the country and the world (our italics).

UNESCO also proposes (2003: 30) three basic guiding principles, no longer simply focused on the mother tongue as it was in 1953, but on intercultural multilingual education as a resource for all:

1. *Mother tongue instruction* as a means of improving educational quality by building upon the knowledge and experience of the learners and teachers;
2. *Bilingual and/or multilingual education* at all levels of education as a means of promoting both social and gender equality and as a key element of linguistically diverse societies;
3. Language as an essential component *of inter-cultural education* in order to encourage understanding between different population groups and ensure respect for fundamental rights.

Bilingual education is increasingly seen as a means through which children and youth can interact within their own ethnolinguistic community, as well as with others. This lens of complex linguistic interactions has been termed "linguistic ecology" (Haugen, 1972; Mühlhäusler, 1996).[21] The challenge of bilingual schools in the twenty-first century is to prepare children to balance their own linguistic ecology (Fettes, 2003), enabling them to go freely back and forth in their overlapping languages and literacies. Mühlhäusler's "ecological approach" (2000, 2002) calls for "a situation of equilibrium whereby languages automatically readjust themselves to fit into the environment, and perpetuate themselves through language contact, rather than isolation" (quoted in Tsai, 2005: 11). Children and educators have to be made aware of their ability to "self-regulate," as languages take on complementary and overlapping roles in different domains of communication (Mühlhäusler, 2000, 2002), but without external language management by the state or even the school itself. Fettes has shown how today's linguistic "geostrategies" which he defines as strategies designed to ensure the co-existence of particular languages or language types (2003: 44) are different from the "politico-strategies" of the twentieth century, in which one language was imposed on others in the state. This ecological approach to bilingualism has very different consequences for bilingual education. We will expand on this in Parts II and III of this book.

One of the biggest changes in the globalized community of the twenty-first century is the blurring of territory that was clearly demarcated by language and culture. Although many territories had only given the appearance of being homogeneous, they provided a context, even if imagined, to enforce monolingual schooling. In the twenty-first century, however, we are aware of the linguistic complexity of the world in which monolingual schooling seems utterly inappropriate. Language differences are seen as a resource, and bilingual education, in all its complexity and forms, seems to be the only way to educate as the world moves forward.

Summary

Table 1.2 provides an overview of the geopolitical changes that have occurred since the end of World War II and their impact on theoretical perspectives for studying language use, as well as language orientations.

Table 1.2 Sociohistorical and Sociolinguistic Orientations and Bilingualism[22]

Stages	*Stage I: The End of WWII until the early 1970s*	*Stage II: The 1970s–1980s*	*Stage III: The mid-1980s to present*
Geopolitical Climate	Independence of Asia and African countries	Economic downturn and widening of social inequalities	Globalization; end of Cold War; growth of NGOs; technological advances
Theoretical Perspective	Structural-functionalist	Critical	Ecological
Language Orientations	Language diversity as problem	Language diversity as right	Language diversity as resource

Conclusion

It is the goal of this book to show how the theories and practices of bilingual education, and the underpinnings that inform it, have grown and developed. From a monoglossic view of bilingual education as a bicycle with two balanced wheels, we propose a bilingual education that is more like an all-terrain vehicle in its heteroglossic possibilities. This book tells the story of that development.

It is also the purpose of this book to offer a critical reading of the current conversations (or lack of them) around bilingual education and multilingualism, and to imagine and construct a paradigm of bilingualism that is not always linear and that reflects the linguistic fluidity present in the discourse of the twenty-first century (this concept will receive more attention in Chapter 3).

In this chapter we distinguished stages which roughly correspond to the three orientations of language-in-education planning that Ruiz (1984) has identified – language as problem, language as right, and language as resource. But we demonstrated how the three conceptions and the different kinds of bilingual education types that reflect these orientations *co-exist* in the twenty-first century, depending on the wishes of peoples and societies, as well as their histories and needs.

It is precisely because (depending on the angle from which we look) bilingual education is seen as a problem, as a right, or as a resource, that we have decided to refer to the enterprise as bilingual education. Adopting more complex, more fluid terms to refer to the educational enterprise that we study here under the rubric of bilingual education would fail to acknowledge different societal realities. We believe that monolingual education is no longer adequate in the twenty-first century, and that every society needs *some* form of bilingual education. Our view of bilingual education is complex, like the banyan tree, allowing for growth in different directions at the same time and grounded in the diverse social realities from which it emerges. Just as bilingualism gives speakers choice, bilingual education gives

school systems more choice, for there are many alternatives. Before we turn to the education element of bilingual education in Parts III and IV, we pay some attention to the language and bilingual elements in Part II of this book.

Parts II, III, and IV are interrelated. Part II examines languages and bilingualism as individual and societal phenomena, within a sociocultural framework that pays attention to how bilingualism develops in different social and cultural contexts. Part III presents program types and variables in bilingual education, as well as policies that are related to the different understandings of bilingualism developed in Part II. Finally, Part IV looks at practices, especially language arrangement, pedagogies, and assessments, which are related to the different understandings held by individuals, communities, and states about bilingualism and bilingual education.

Although Part IV will be more pertinent for classroom teachers, Part III for school systems and societies, and Part II for scholars of bilingualism, it would be useful to read all parts in sequence. Understanding the nature and purpose of language and bilingualism, and the bilingual education options available, is important in order to develop adequate pedagogies and practices.

Questions for Reflection

1. What is bilingual education? How does it differ from language education?
2. Explain the difference between the bicycle and the all-terrain vehicle in thinking about bilingualism.
3. What is the relevance of the image of the banyan tree to this treatment of bilingual education?
4. What are some of the reasons why the term "bilingual education" has become contested, and why have we adopted it in this book?
5. What are some possible benefits of bilingual education? Who are the potential beneficiaries?
6. What is the difference in viewing language as a problem, as a right, and as a resource, and how has this impacted on the development of bilingual education?

Further Reading

Baker, C. (2006). *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon, UK. Fourth edn.

Baker, C., and Prys Jones, S. (1998). *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education*. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon, UK.

García, O., and Baker, C. (eds.) (2007). *Bilingual Education: An Introductory Reader*. Multilingual Matters, Clevedon, UK.